GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Policy and Planning Administration

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Jerrily R. Kress, FAIA
Director
Office of Zoning

FROM: Kenneth G. Laden
Associate Director for Transportation Planning

DATE: September 11, 2002

SUBJECT: BZA Application No. 16911 – Application for Special Exception and Variance Relief for 700 Brandywine Street, SE, Square 6163, Lot 125

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the subject application and material for the above site. This memorandum addresses the transportation aspects of the proposal.

The applicant, the Brandywine Street Association (BSA), proposes to renovate an existing vacant three-story apartment building with a basement located on the subject lot into a community service center and child development center. The applicant is requesting zoning relief for six items including special exceptions to operate a child development center and community service center, and variances from lot occupancy, floor area ratio, parking, and court requirements of the Zoning Regulations. This report will focus on the special exception requests and the proposed variances from the parking requirements.

The site is located mid-block on the north side of the 700 Block of Brandywine Street, SE and is bounded by a 15' wide public alley to the rear. There is approximately a 15'grade increase as you move from the public sidewalk in the front of the structure to the public alley at the rear. Currently the only way to access the building is by stairs that lead down from the public alley and parking spaces to the rear, or lead up to the structure from the Brandywine Street sidewalk. The applicant proposes to install an elevator and a wheelchair accessible ramp at the front of the structure to provide handicapped accessibility from Brandywine Street. The applicant must coordinate with DDOT Traffic Services Administration to receive approval for the design of the proposed handicap access ramp located in the public right-of-way; additionally public space permits will be required for the ramp.

BZA Case No. 16911 Exhibit No. 28

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16911
EXHIBIT NO.28

With the exceptions of the proposed BSA office to be located on the first floor, and the computer-training room located on the third floor, all community activities are proposed to occupy the basement floor including the police community outreach office, counseling services, laundromat, and community meeting room. The total area occupied by community uses totals approximately 930 ft.². The first and second floors are identified as the Child Development Center proposed to accommodate a total of 46 infants and young children and ten (10) staff between the hours of 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM. The third floor is proposed to house the Youth Program portion of the Child Development Center targeting children over the age of five, accommodating 15 children and two (2) staff.

The applicant proposes to provide two (2) off-street parking spaces on site, accessed by the public alley, to serve teachers and employees who work in shifts at the center. The applicant is required to provide one (1) parking space for each four (4) staff of the child development center for a total of three (3) parking spaces. For the community uses, the applicant is required to provide one (1) parking space for each 10 seats of occupancy, provided where such seats are not fixed, each 7 ft.² usable for seating shall be considered one seat. The total area devoted to community uses is 930 ft.² thus the off-street parking requirement is 13 parking spaces. The overall off-street parking requirement is 16 parking spaces. The applicant states that a majority of visitors to the site, would reside in the immediate community and would not drive or need parking on site however, no accommodations have been proposed for visitors or children who would be dropped of and picked up by automobile.

DDOT staff conducted a midday site visit. The 700 Block of Brandywine Street, SE is a two way local road with one travel lane and one parking lane for each direction. Curbside parking is allowed on both sides of the street. The public alley was poorly maintained and full of trash and debris, including several abandoned and burned vehicles. Additionally, the subject site and deteriorating building was in very poor condition and full of trash and debris, with visual evidence that illegal activities including dumping and trespassing does occur on site.

The applicant states that approximately 28 on-street parking spaces are available on the block, however curbside parking adjacent to the site appeared to be at capacity. The small size of the site, unusual lot shape, and existing topographical conditions restricts the applicant from providing more than the two (2) proposed parking spaces on site. To accommodate the required parking, the applicant would be required to re-grade the site, provide a parking pad from the alley to the existing open court on the site, and eliminate the two proposed outdoor play areas totaling 900 ft². The applicant must coordinate with the DDOT Curbside Management Division to amend regulatory parking signage in front of the site to provide parking spaces for the exclusive use of visitors and staff.

The proposed redevelopment of the subject site would be a benefit to the neighborhood by providing community services, activities for youth, eliminate a visual and physical

blight, and generate positive activity. As stated by the applicant, a majority of patrons will reside in the immediate community and walk to the site and therefore will not cause a large increase in traffic volume on neighboring streets. Of concern to DDOT is the availability of parking for the 12 staff employed at the proposed BSA Center. The proposed Center will have some impact on on-street parking supply. Therefore we would require that the applicant develop a program to encourage employees to use Metrobus service that is available nearby. We believe that the benefits of the proposed community center outweigh the potential on-street parking congestion. Accordingly, DDOT has no objection to the parking variance.

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